

AEEP funding continues to be focused on providing an incentive for farmers to adopt water quality and water conservation best management practices.

This year AEEP will include incentives to help farmers contribute to climate protection efforts. Actions which improve energy efficiency and/or reduce greenhouse gas emissions on farms will also be considered for funding.

There are two types of projects that will be considered for funding:

1. installation of best management practices for air, soil and water and,
2. purchase of herbicide and insecticide resistant field corn seed.

WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM FUNDING LEVEL PER-FARM?

The total funds being awarded this year are approximately \$250,000.

A maximum of \$24,000 per farm may be awarded.

HOW WILL APPLICATIONS BE EVALUATED?

Applications are evaluated on the following criteria: (Shellfish growers excluded*)

1. Farms located within and with potential to impact a Zone I, Zone II, Zone A or B or a high yielding Aquifer.
2. Existence of stream or wetlands impacted by farmyard runoff.
3. Extent to which activity conserves water, improves water quality and improves air quality
4. Confirmation by Project Coordinator, that there is a need for the activity.
5. Ability to complete the project on or before June 30, 2005.

Additional points will be awarded to:

1. Farms located within an Outstanding Resource Area (ORW) or and Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)
2. Farms with a development restriction under the Agricultural Resources' Agricultural Preservation Restriction program.
3. Farms *currently* participating in the Farm Viability Enhancement Program or the Cranberry Viability Enhancement Program.

HOW WILL APPLICATIONS BE EVALUATED, Continued

4. Innovative projects that conserve water and/or improve water quality.
5. Purchase of pesticide storage cabinets or gas/diesel fuel containment structures.
6. Purchase of fuel-efficient motors, irrigation pumps or alternative energy system pumps (solar, for example) as replacement for equipment that is currently in use, which improves water and air quality.

Farmers who were awarded AEEP funds in past years will receive lesser consideration.

***Shellfish Growers**

Considering the unique characteristics of shellfish growing enterprises, applications from shellfish growers are evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Extent to which the proposal addresses the installation, implementation or incorporation of the "Best Management Practices for the Shellfish Culture industry in Southeastern Massachusetts" (SEMAC, 2004). To receive a copy contact Southeastern Massachusetts Aquaculture Center c/o Barnstable County Cooperative Extension at 508-362-2511 or call Agricultural Resources at 617-625-1730.
2. Extent to which the proposal the applicant justifies the proposed activities in the context of environmental benefit to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

1. Farmers/growers who have the potential to impact natural resources (air, soil, water),
2. Those who are licensed by the Commonwealth to grow molluscan bivalve species (shellfish growers),
3. New Entry Farmers (people who have been farming 0 to 10 years on existing farmland); and,
4. Commercial horse operations that generate \$2,500 or more in annual income from the horse component of the farm (i.e. not the raising of feed).

Farmers/growers who meet any of these criteria are eligible if they (excluding shellfish growers):

1. Actively farm at least five acres, or
2. Have at least three acres in bog production or,
3. Have at least 5,000 square feet under greenhouse production,

AND

4. Have proof of a written and updated natural resources conservation plan. Greenhouse and flower growers and shellfish growers are excluded from this requirement.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION?

ROUND 1 DUE NOVEMBER 26, 2004 US POSTAL SERVICE DATE STAMP OR HAND DELIVER BY 4:00PM. Applications received but not funded in Round 1 will be considered for funding in Round 2. Construction projects will be considered *only* in this Round.

ROUND 2 DUE April 1, 2005 US POSTAL SERVICE DATE STAMP OR HAND DELIVER BY 4:00PM

ELECTRONIC COPIES OF COMPLETED APPLICATIONS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.

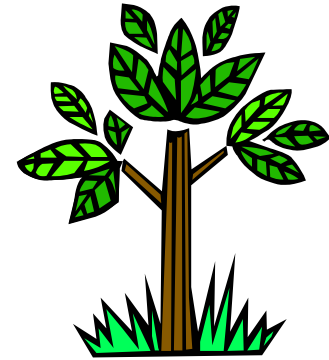
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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The Application is also available on the Department's website:
www.Mass.gov/AGR

AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

FISCAL YEAR 2005
(July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005)



PROGRAM PURPOSE:

To assist Massachusetts' farmers in addressing areas on their farms that impact or could impact the natural resources of the Commonwealth.

APPLICATION DUE DATES:

November 26, 2004
AND
April 1, 2005

FUNDED BY:
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES
251 Causeway St., Boston, MA 02144